

# **1st Coy. 5/60th Royal American (Rifles)**

## **Joining Information**

### **Unit Background**

As a modern day re-enactment group, the 5/60th Rifles intend to portray a company of rifleman fighting in the Peninsular wars as accurately as possible.

The unit has members mainly based within the Midlands, but also boasts members in Anglesey, Peterborough, Spain and even the USA too!



The original battalion was raised in 1797, by Lt. Col. Baron Francis de Rottenburg, and was the first rifle armed, green jacketed and rifle trained battalion in the British Army; raised 3 years before Coote Manningham's 'Experimental Corps of Rifleman' (later the 95th Rifles).

The 5/60th Royal American (Rifles) also boasted the most decorated private soldier & officer of the Peninsular Wars in Danny Loochstadt & Jean Pierre Galiffe respectively, who both won fifteen battle honours each.

There are also surviving letters written by Baron Marbot and no less than Marshall Soult; both complaining of the deadly accuracy of the riflemen of the 5/60th in particular - stating that over 500 officers had been lost to riflemen of the 5/60th in one month - but also bestowing the honour on them as being 'The best Marksmen in Europe'.

### **Membership**

If you've got this far, then your clearly interested in the group and have a profound love of history - which is something we all share within the group, as well as a mutual respect and sense of pride in portraying this quirky, unique and radical battalion of riflemen.

We ask potential new members to join us at three 'taster' events before applying to become a full member. Each taster event costs £5 a time, and kit is available to lend out from the central stores. Once you have completed the third taster event, you can apply to become a full member, which costs £25 per individual, or £40 for a family. Camp followers membership is £15 a year.

### **Uniform & Equipment**

The uniform we wear is that of a rifleman of the 1808-1814 period. We source our kit from many suppliers, as well as making some items in house.

There is another document, which is available on our forum or by e-mail from the unit CO, which lists all required items and where to source them from.

There is no immediate pressure to purchase all your kit at once, as the unit will help and support you with loan kit where possible until you have the necessary uniform.

### **Discipline, Drill & Respect**

As a Rifle battalion, the 5/60th were originally trained in close order line drill, before moving on to being trained in Baron de Rottenburg's Rifle manual. Furthermore the men were chosen and recruited for their marksmanship, and this coupled with their training is what made them the elite regiment of the day. The Duke of Wellington also referred to the riflemen as 'The eyes and ears of the army'.

We have a simple hierarchical rank structure, as per the 19th Century 5/60th, with private soldiers at the bottom, and the company commanding officer at the top. All ranks are chosen by the newly elected chairperson at the AGM each year.

We expect all members to respect the ranks of members in the group, and when an NCO/Officer gives an order, he/she is only acting a role out, and each member is expected to respond in the appropriate way.

## **Eating at Events**

Whilst on events, we strive to 'central mess', whereby members take it in turn to cook and wash up. Meals are done at cost price and organised on an event by event basis.

At most big events there are traders selling hot and cold food, and there is usually a shop or supermarket nearby if required also.

## **Camping at Events**

As a group we camp in living history tents. We have some members who camp authentically on straw, with no modern items in sight; and we also have members who use modern sleeping bags, beds and so forth too. The choice is yours!

## **Weapons**

When formed in 1797, the unit were equipped with the Jaeger Rifle. Around the period of 1803, the unit received their first batch of 'The Infantry Rifle', now better known as The Baker Rifle.

As re-enactors we use, on the whole, a smooth bore version of the Infantry Rifle, which can be used by members who obtain a Shotgun Licence and Black Powder explosives licence from their local Constabulary. We use black powder and fire the infantry rifles using the original 18th Century loading procedure as per the original Rifle drill manual of 1797.

Full training will be provided for new members wishing to use a black powder firer, including how to load, fire, roll cartridges, handle powder and of course clean the infantry rifle.



## **What Next?**

The first steps to take once registering your interest with the group, is to look at our events calendar and decide on an event you would first like to make. At this event you will meet the other members of the group, and make a start on learning the foot drill and firing drills of this elite battalion. The drill may look complicated, but when broken down and taught in stages it is actually quite simple.

Loan kit is available from the central stores, and we do recommend purchasing a shirt and pair of boots before your first event where possible.

Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to call or e-mail me.

Yours Faithfully,

Captain Davies  
Officer Commanding  
1st Coy. 5/60th Royal American (Rifles)

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